



# Penny Bernard Schaber

*Serving the heart of Appleton*

STATE REPRESENTATIVE 57th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Thank you Chairwoman Kerkman, for allowing me an opportunity to testify in support of AB382. I appreciate the opportunity to address you and the members of the Ways and Means Committee.

AB 382 is a proposal to do something that many of my constituents, my colleagues and I have asked for over many years. Prior to being elected as a State Representative I was a frequent writer to my legislators. I actually wrote letters to my legislators asking that policy items be removed from the budget.

I am able to clearly remember writing several letters in 1995 specifically asking that the policy that made the DNR Secretary a gubernatorial appointment be removed from the budget, because it was a policy item and not a fiscal item. I was not successful in that endeavor and over the years since 1995 there have many other policy items included in the biennial budget.

Many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have made public comments asking for policy items to be removed from the budget. This has been raised as a concern of many elected officials and their constituents for many years.

AB 382 is before you today. It presents a process for doing what has been asked for by many over many years.

As you can read in the Legislative Reference Bureau's analysis of the bill, AB 482 establishes a process for removing nonfiscal policy items from the biennial budget. The process uses established definitions of nonfiscal items currently used by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

Specifically AB 382 gives the LFB 30 days to identify nonfiscal policy items and then the bill requires that these items be removed from the budget and be presented to the Joint Committee on Finance, the cochairpersons of JCF are then asked to introduce the identified items as separate bills before the biennial budget is voted on in the legislature.

This will result in the removal of nonfiscal policy items from the budget and allow those items to be acted on as if they were individual legislative proposals through the committee process. I believe this is the way the legislature should act. This is the way policy proposals can receive appropriate scrutiny from legislators and from our constituents, the public.

AB 482 also provides that budget amendments can not be added to the biennial budget if they contain nonfiscal policy items as identified by LFC. This prevents a back door approach to adding policy back into the biennial budget as amendments.

In developing this bill I worked with the Legislative fiscal Bureau. Bob Lang is here today to testify for information on AB 482. I appreciate working with Mr. Lang on AB 482 and on the biennial budget.

Thank you for allowing me to testify this morning. I can answer questions you may have at this point. I encourage you to consider AB 382 carefully, have an executive session on it and to allow AB 482 to move forward in the legislative process. I believe this will improve our biennial budget process greatly and will help to restore trust and confidence in the legislature.

Thank you.

DISTRICT  
(920) 739-9001  
815 E. Washington St.  
Appleton, WI 54911  
[rep.bernardschaber@legis.wi.gov](mailto:rep.bernardschaber@legis.wi.gov)  
<http://bernardschaber.assembly.wi.gov>

STATE CAPITOL  
PO Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708  
(608) 266-3070  
FAX: (608) 282-3657  
Toll-free: (888) 534-0057